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**RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, March 1, 2021, 6:00 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting Via Zoom**

**In attendance:** Gregg Mikolaities, Chairman, Cory Belden, Todd Cronin, Stephen King, Brett Mulvey, Joe Persechino, Georgina Saravia, Commissioners, and Lee Arthur, Recreation Director.

**Public:** Pam Helfrich and Lisa Jacobus.

**Zoom Coordinator:** Becky Bergeron

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m.

**II. Compliant Statement by Gregg Mikolaities**

A Checklist to Ensure Meetings are Compliant with the Right-to-Know Law During the State of Emergency.

As Chair of the Recreation Commission, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

- a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Recreation Commission have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 646-558-8656, with meeting ID# 876-0912-0056 and password 745896, or by participating via Zoom with meeting ID# 897-0912-0056 and password 745896.

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom. Instructions have also been provided on the Town of Rye website at [www.town.rye.nh.us](http://www.town.rye.nh.us)

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:

If anybody has a problem, please email Becky Bergeron at [bbergeron@town.rye.nh.us](mailto:bbergeron@town.rye.nh.us)

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know Law.

### **III. Roll Call Attendance**

Gregg Mikolaities asked Cory Belden to start. Cory Belden, no one else is in the room; Georgina Saravia indicated that Josephine Saravia and her au pair Val is in the room; Stephen King, no one else is in the room; Joe Persechino, no one else in the room; Todd Cronin, no one else in the room; and Brett Mulvey, no one else in the room.

### **IV. Approval of Minutes**

The Recreation Commissioners reviewed the meeting minutes of Wednesday, January 20, 2021.

*Motion was made by Cory Belden to approve the Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, January 20, 2021. Seconded by Georgina Saravia. All in favor roll call vote: Cory Belden, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Georgina Saravia, yes; Brett Mulvey, yes; and Gregg Mikolaities, yes. Stephen King and Joe Persechino, abstained. Motion carried.*

### **V. Correspondence**

#### **Recreation Field(s) Use Application Boy Scout Troop 164**

The application was not received as they have decided to have their event at a different location.

#### **Financial Reports**

Lee Arthur provided the Recreation Commissioners with the financial reports for February. She pointed out that the current year budget is not reflected in the reports

because the Town works in a default budget until the Town vote takes place each year. The recreation budget had \$36,705.48 expended. The recreation revolving budget had \$761.07 expended. The patriotic purposes budget had \$0 expended. The Youth Recreational Athletics Account balance was \$97,170.09.

## **VII. Old Business**

### **Recreation Commission Positions**

Gregg Mikolaities and Brett Mulvey's term on the Recreation Commission are expiring and they both expressed an interest in continuing to serve.

*Motion was made by Joe Persechino to recommend that Brett Mulvey serve another 3-year term on the Recreation Commission expiring in 2024 to the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Cory Belden. All in favor roll call vote: Cory Belden, yes; Stephen King, yes; Joe Persechino, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Georgina Saravia, yes; and Gregg Mikolaities, yes. Brett Mulvey abstained. Motion carried.*

*Motion was made by Cory Belden to recommend that Gregg Mikolaities serve another 3-year term on the Recreation Commission expiring in 2024 to the Board of Selectmen. Seconded by Georgina Saravia. All in favor roll call vote: Cory Belden, yes; Stephen King, yes; Joe Persechino, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Georgina Saravia, yes; and Brett Mulvey, yes. Gregg Mikolaities abstained. Motion carried.*

### **Recreation Area Master Plan**

Gregg Mikolaities indicated that it has been a while since the last Master Plan was completed. He suggested having a discussion regarding different ideas people may have for the Recreation Area, so that a consultant could get onboard and a formal plan could be developed.

Stephen King suggested a combined tennis and basketball facility on the top of the slope overlooking the Ralph Morang Multi-purpose Field, behind the storage facility. Cory Belden indicated that long term he would like an indoor recreation center at the area. However, first he would like to see smaller initiatives take place, like the building of tennis courts and pointed out that there are none in Rye. It was mentioned all ideas should be gathered, prioritized and laid out on a plan. Gregg Mikolaities noted that a lot of the homework has already been established. When the space needs study was completed.

Joe Persechino indicated that he echoed Cory Belden's comments and noted that Lisa Jacobus has mentioned in the chat area of zoom about pickle ball courts and a pump track. He felt that a pump track had a relatively small footprint of about ½ acre and is a popular activity.

Gregg Mikolaities mentioned that the residents have been surveyed in the past and they ranked in order of importance biking trails and lanes; walking and jogging paths; public

open space for walks; outdoor tennis courts; indoor pool; outdoor pool; outdoor ice rink; community center; neighborhood parks; expand the playground; pavilion; picnic area; running track; indoor tennis courts; additional soccer and lacrosse fields; outdoor basketball court; beach volleyball court; skateboard area; ropes course; indoor basketball court; adult baseball and softball fields; lighting for fields; and indoor volleyball courts.

Todd Cronin asked what were the results of past efforts. Gregg Mikolaities noted that the Recreation Commission pushed forward with the community center concept because it addressed a lot of the needs identified. The New Castle Recreation Facility was looked at as a model. However, the public voted down the warrant article for an architect to produce a plan even though only 50% of the funds were to be raised from taxes.

Brett Mulvey suggested a covered area that would be multi-purpose and could house basketball, tennis and volleyball. He suggested it could be located between the little league field and the soccer fields and in the winter act as an ice rink. As well as be a good flexible space for baseball and lacrosse.

Gregg Mikolaities mentioned that it will be interesting to see what happens with the school population. Whether it will turn around and increase or continue to decrease because if it decreases the Town may have a building available.

Todd Cronin mentioned that consideration should be given to where the Recreation Office should be housed, with the changes happening in town, including the TD Bank Building, Town Hall and Church.

It was discussed that behind the TD Bank Building would be a good location for a pump track. It was noted that the Conservation Commission has acquired the property and that it was thought that they would be holding a public hearing regarding the property.

Georgina Saravia thought that there are a lot of opportunities with a pavilion and liked the pump track idea. She indicated that pavilions are common where she is from and that in Texas the surfaces were concrete.

It was noted that \$10,000 has been budgeted to conduct a study and that the next step is to develop an RFP. Lee Arthur was requested to send a copy of the past RFPs to the Recreation Commissioners prior to the next meeting.

Gregg Mikolaities asked the public for their input. Lisa Jacobus indicated that she liked the pump track idea and that long term a pavilion (open air space) makes sense and may have more buy in. Pam Helfrich mentioned the pump track, ninja course, rope course, pavilion and really liked the concept of having one central location that would have activities for the whole family. She also suggested a snack shack operated by volunteers to raise funds. Stephen King pointed out that the parking lot would need to be expanded when considering the ideas presented.

## **VIII. New Business**

### **Spring and Summer Programming**

Lee Arthur explained that the deadline for the March Town Newsletter was last week and that she has been trying to develop a schedule for spring and summer programs.

However, it has been difficult acquiring facilities. Included in the meeting packet was the newsletter article. She read the opening paragraphs of the article. “Rye Recreation hopes to offer the following programs this spring and summer following the State of New Hampshire COVID-19 reopening guidance. At this time the programming has **not** been confirmed due to the inability to acquire the use of facilities and/or instructors. However, as time progresses it is anticipated that confirmation maybe acquired, and we wanted you to be aware of our efforts as we try to reopen. We do plan on releasing a completed program schedule by April 19, 2021 and holding our Spring and Summer Programs Sign-up Commencement on May 3, 2021 for most programs. By that time, we hope to have made all adjustments to the preliminary offerings below and know if the programs can or cannot be offered.”

Lee Arthur indicated that there are some challenges in following the Safer at Home Amateur and Youth Sports and Day Camp Guidance. But if Rye Recreation can use the two lower classrooms at Rye Elementary School for the Summertime Horyezons Day Camp the guidance could be met, and the program offered. Program participation would still need to be limited. An e-mail requesting the use of the space has been sent to the principal and superintendent and a building use form asking for use of room 100 and 200 from June 28-August 13, 2021 has been submitted.

It was discussed that tentatively the plan was that each classroom would have two staff and 15 participants. However, currently the guidance is suggesting small groups of 10 and that would make it difficult to operate the program financially. Lee Arthur pointed out that she meets regularly with Recreation Directors in other communities and they have indicated that the guidance maybe changing to groups of 20. Additional assistance may be needed to deal with COVID related requirements around pick-up drop off etc. It was indicated that a lot of the planning regarding operating during the pandemic had been previously prepared. The cost of having tents was noted and if the program could be offered at the school, the cost would be \$180 a week.

The Summertime Horyezon Day Camp schedule would be Week 1, June 28-July 2, Under the Sea; Week 2, July 6-9 with no camp on July 5<sup>th</sup>, Lego® Masters; Week 3, July 12-16, Over the Moon; Week 4, July 19-23, Down on the Farm; Week 5, July 26-30, Outdoor Discoveries; Week 6, August 2-6, Wet, Wild and Amusing!; Week 7, August 9-13, Games and Crafts Galore!

Baseball camp is tentatively scheduled for August 9-13, 2021. However, David Adam is unable to instruct this year due to the pandemic affecting his business. Basketball camp has an instructor for both weeks June 28-July 2, 2021 and July 6-9, 2021 (no camp on July 5<sup>th</sup>). However, the use of the elementary school gymnasium has not been confirmed. Rye Elementary School is requested because of the ability to lower hoops.

Lego® robotics programmer course can be offered. However, at this time the video game designer course may not be able to be offered.

The International Soccer Camp is offered by Challenger Sport July 26-30, 2021 and has been confirmed. Youth group golf lessons held at Pease Golf Course (Week 1, July 12-16, 2021 and Week 2, August 9-13, 2021) have been confirmed. Youth group surfing lessons have not been confirmed. Partially because of accessibility to the beaches and permitting not be solidified. Group tennis lessons have not been confirmed. The Town of New Castle Facility was requested, and they responded that at this time they could not commit. It was pointed out that they have been very good at opening their facility to Rye Recreation in the past and that currently they are not opening the facility to anyone including their residents. The adult group golf lessons (co-ed) and women's group golf lessons at Pease Golf Course are confirmed. The adult group surfing lessons have not been confirmed partially because of accessibility to the beaches and permitting not be solidified. The spring and summer adult yoga & meditation program may be dependent on the instructor getting a vaccination. The plan is to have the recreational soccer league in the fall.

The Select Board recently voted that the Memorial Day Ceremony will be virtual. Therefore, a video like last year will be produced and Bob Glowacky a Rye Resident has agreed to assist with the project. The Town Newsletter will have an article requesting entries for the Memorial Day Poster and Writing Contest as well as the July 4<sup>th</sup> Patriotic Faces of Rye Photo Contest. The deadline is April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021 for the poster and writing contest. The Select Board have not decided yet to have fireworks on July 4<sup>th</sup>. There could be a funding issue if the town is operating in a default budget as the funds may not be available.

Gregg Mikolaities asked Todd Cronin if he heard anything regarding the ice rink that Rye Congregational Church had planned on installing. Todd Cronin mentioned, he spoke with a neighbor and the project has been put on hold.

Brett Mulvey mentioned that maybe the school would allow Rye Recreation to use their tents in addition to the facility. It was mentioned that moving forward and reflecting on COVID, the day camp participants would be better served at the school and a facility is really needed to operate that program.

Lisa Jacobus asked how many participants take part in the camp and how many could take part at the Rye Recreation Facility. Lee Arthur indicated that the camp maximum has been 40 in the past and the age of participants is mostly between K-4<sup>th</sup> grade. If the

camp is held at the Rye Recreation Facility only 10 participants could be accommodated because of the guidance and the lack of square footage. The school would potentially be able to accommodate 15 participants in each classroom. Lisa Jacobus asked if it could be held without a facility and mentioned accessing the library. Lee Arthur mentioned that the library would be an option but there is no playground or outdoor fields.

Gregg Mikolaities mentioned that consistently the feedback received from people that do not participate in the summer program is that there are better facilities on the seacoast than Rye's. Lisa Jacobus suggested partnering with the school board because families need the program for their children. She conveyed that the virtual Memorial Day Ceremony is ok, but it is important to honor those that have served and exhibit a way to say thank you.

Pam Helfrich thought that holding the camp at Rye Elementary School was a great idea even long term as the children would have access to both playgrounds and plenty of room. She pointed out, holding the program at the school also allows incoming kindergarteners a nice transition into school and that parents are still having difficulty with no after school program. She asked if there would be an after school program in the fall. Lee Arthur mentioned that the school stated that they would contact Rye Recreation when they decide to open to the public. Pam Helfrich asked how they could assist. Lee Arthur mentioned that they could let the school know if they need the programming. She acknowledged that the school has faced challenges this school year and said she understands the priority of keeping students in school Monday-Thursday.

Gregg Mikolaities indicated that he wants to stay on the Recreation Commission but not as chairman. Cory Belden mentioned that he has been vice chairman and is willing to take over the role as chairman. He mentioned that he would look to Gregg Mikolaities for support, as there is a lot going on in providing services to the community. Joe Persechino stated that he is willing to be vice chairman and thanked Gregg Mikolaities for his contribution over the past twenty years.

***Motion was made by Todd Cronin to nominate Cory Belden as Recreation Commission Chairman. Seconded by Stephen King. All in favor roll call vote: Stephen King, yes; Joe Persechino, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Brett Mulvey, yes; Gregg Mikolaities, yes; Cory Belden abstained. Motion carried.***

It was noticed that Georgina Saravia had disconnected from the meeting and was not available to vote.

***Motion was made by Stephen King to nominate Joe Persechino as Recreation Commission Vice Chairman. Seconded by Brett Mulvey. All in favor roll call vote: Cory Belden, yes; Stephen King, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Brett Mulvey, yes; Gregg Mikolaities, yes; and Joe Persechino abstained. Motion carried.***

The next meeting of the Recreation Commission was set for Monday, April 5, 2021.

## **IX. Adjournment**

***Motion was made by Brett Mulvey to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 p.m. seconded by Cory Belden. All in favor roll call vote: Cory Belden, yes; Stephen King, yes; Joe Persechino, yes; Todd Cronin, yes; Brett Mulvey, yes; Gregg Mikolaities, yes; and Georgina Saravia, yes. Motion carried.***

Georgina Saravia indicated that she had got disconnected and supported the nominations for chairman and vice chairman.

Gregg Mikolaities thanked Lisa Jacobus and Pam Helfrich for their participation and attendance.

*\*These are draft minutes. Please refer to the minutes of the next meeting for approvals/corrections.*